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ABSTRACT

The first part of this study examined children's concepts of "preference of racial diversities" (PRD); nonviolent conflict-resolution (NCR); and "negative peace" (NP), defined as "peace in contrast to war." The first part also assessed children's mental development. The second part examined the relation of children's understanding of PRD, NCR, and NP to their mental development, and the relation of children's understanding of NP to their understanding of NCR and PRD. Interviews with 42 children of 5 and 6 years of age were conducted. The mental development of the children was assessed. Results from the first part of the study indicated that: (1) a majority of children had reached the concrete operations stage in Piaget's scheme of cognitive development; (2) children demonstrated a more developed understanding of war than of NP, and a more developed understanding of NCR and PRD than of NP; and (3) a total of 60 percent of children did not demonstrate any particular racial attitude or preference. Results from the second part of the study indicated no significant correlations between variables. A bibliography of 108 items is provided. (BC)

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YOUNG CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF PEACE CONCEPTS: NEGATIVE PEACE, NONVIOLENT-CONFLICT-RESOLUTION, AND POSITIVE PEACE

Summary of Dissertation, Farideh Oboodiat
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Introduction

The effect on young people of the fear of nuclear war has been investigated in a number of studies. Studies in child development show that children as young as four years old feel threatened by the fear of nuclear war (Escalondas, 1965; Backer, 1983; Goodman, 1983; Lemoine, 1983; Mackay, 1983; Ringler; 1983; Aarons, 1984; Burt, 1984; Engel, 1984; Mack, 1984; Myers-Walls, 1984; Reifel, 1984; Carlsson, 1985; Tephly, 1985; Wagner, 1985; Dinklage,1986; Hammatt-Kavaloski, 1986; Petroveskey, 1986; Williams, 1987.) Child development specialists suggest that through peace education we could help young children to cope with this fear. Due to the importance of establishing values and attitudes in early childhood, a number of studies and some early childhood world organizations such as UNESCO and OMEP indicate that peace should be taught during this early period of development.

Among the obstacles to world peace education are the ambiguity and the vagueness of peace concepts (Montessori, 1932; Drapa, 1972; True, 1982; Marion, 1983; Ringler, 1983; Werner, 1983; Engel, 1984; Clarsson, 1985; Wiser, 1985; Clarken, 1986; Kneeshow, 1986; Bjerstedt, 1987.) This could be concluded from the greater problem of our time, that peace education has never been practiced as much as war education (Hadjisky , 1972; Linsell, 1973; McKenzie, 1980; Marion, 1983; Ringler, 1983; Ogilvie, 1984; Skinner, 1985; Nilsson, 1986.)

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Purpose of the Study

The purpose and importance of this study were as follows:

1. To help young children cope with the fear of nuclear war
2. Relatively, to clarify the ambiguity of peace concepts
3. To consider the capacity of young children to understand the two more advanced aspects of positive peace rather than negative peace.
4. To stimulate and encourage conducting further studies to clarify the ambiguity of peace concepts
5. To develop two sets of measurement to evaluate three aspects of peace concepts by testing its validity in two pilot studies.
6. To stimulate and encourage further studies to improve the validity and reliability of the measurements used in this study.

Questions to Be Answered

Two series of questions were designed for Parts 1 and 2 of this study.

Questions designed for Part 1 were as followings:

1. What is the child's concept of preference of racial diversities (PRD)?
2. What is the child's concept of nonviolent-conflict-resolution (NCR) (subjectively and objectively)?
3. What is the child's concept of negative peace (NP) (peace in contrast to war)?
4. What is the subject's degree of mental development?

Questions designed for Part 2 were as follows:

1. Is there correlation between a child's understanding of three aspects of peace concepts (NP, NCR, PRD) and their mental development, gender, and background in peace education (impact of philosophy of peace education in the Montessori program)?
2. Is there relationship between a child's understanding of negative peace and her/his comprehension of other two aspects of peace concepts (NCR and PRD)?

Review of Literature

Although the ultimate goal of this study was to investigate young children's understanding of peace concepts, the researcher first had to conduct an expanded review of literature for clarification of the peace concept. From a religious, political, intellectual and educational viewpoint, three developmental stages were defined for peace concepts: 1) negative peace, 2) nonviolence, and 3) positive peace (Tolstoy 1828-1910; Waziolek, 1985; World Encyclopedia of Peace (WEP) Danesh, Ferguson, Galtung, Garsa Mathurr, Mendlovitz, Neglaer, Pauling, 1986; Time, 1989; Clarken, 1986)

Interestingly and coincidentally, the researcher discovered that the majority of educators highly recommended two principles in world peace. These were appreciation of cultural and racial diversities (positive peace) (Linsell, 1973; Allahwerdi, 1977; Morris, 1977; Burns, 1981; Sweeney, 1982; Werner, 1983; Greiner, 1984; Carlsson, 1985; Overly, 1985; Prospect, 1985; Tephly, 1985; Clarken, 1986; WEP-Danesh, 1986; Petrovsky, 1986; Engelbrecht, 1987; Phillips, 1988) and nonviolent-conflict-resolution (Hadjiski, 1972; Linsell, 1973; Allahwerdi, 1977; Burns, 1981; Greiner, 1984; Myers-Walls, 1984; Carlsson, 1985; Tephly, 1985; Prospect, 1985; Hammatt-Kavaloski, 1986; Kneeshow, 1986).

The review of literature focused next on young children's understanding of three aspects of peace concepts. The results of the literature review could be categorized related to 1) positive peace: preference of racial diversities (PRD), 2) nonviolent-conflict-resolution (NCR), and 3) negative peace (NP), as follows:

1. Preference of Racial Diversities (PRD)

A desirable attitude toward acceptance and preference of racial diversities (a principle in positive peace) could be established, shaped, and modified at early ages through modeling and influence of surrounding adults

2. Nonviolent-Conflict-Resolution (NCR)

Children as young as three years old are capable of logical thinking and can be trained to resolve their social conflicts.

3. Negative Peace (NP)

Children have demonstrated more expanded concepts of war than of peace, and their concept of negative peace (peace in contrast to war) was very limited and poor.

Procedure

This study consisted of two parts, descriptive and correlational. In the first part, the researcher investigated five and six year olds' mental development (MD) and their understanding of three aspects of peace concepts (PRD, NCR, NP). In the second part, the researcher conducted the following correlations to discover possible relationship between:

1) subjects' understanding of three aspects of peace concepts (PRD, NCR, and NP) with their: a) mental development, b) gender difference, c) background in peace education (impact of peace education in Montessori programs)

2) subjects' understanding of Negative Peace with other aspects of peace concepts as NCR and PRD

Sample

Forty-two five and six year old Caucasian children equally divided by gender, were randomly selected from the central Texas area (Austin). Children were selected from six private pre-schools, 24 from three Montessori schools and 18 from three other schools, and represented average socio-economic backgrounds.

Data Collection

Data were collected through individual interviews, which were tape recorded and scored by the interviewer (researcher) on interview-guide form. Data was subsequently interpreted by two judges.

Instrument

Subjects' mental development was evaluated by Goldschmid Concept Assessment Kit-Conservation. The following instruments were designed to investigate subjects' understanding of peace concepts:

1. Two series of open-ended questions accompanied by colored photographs for PRD
2. Two series of open-ended questions accompanied by relevant colored illustrations for NCR
3. Two open-ended questions for NP

Two Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted to improve the validity of NCR and PRD questions. As a result of these studies, illustrations of NCR questions and modifications of PRD verbal questions were, made. These changes in questions reduced variability of scores and normalized data distribution in NCR during the second pilot study.

Data Analysis

In part 1, data were analyzed descriptively and tools of Mean (X), Standard Deviation (SD), and percentage were used to analyze the data. Each question in every aspect of peace concepts was analyzed with a four-interval-scale and scored as: very developed A = & < 9, developed B = & < 6, less developed C = & < 3, and not developed D=0. Scores of Piagetian tests were also converted to the same four interval rank scores to be used conveniently in the correlational process of the study.

Table 1 provides the general design of part I of this study, including variables, related instruments, and type of scale and score applied in this part.

Table 1

Variables, Measurement, Analysis Used in Part I

4 VARIABLES 4 sets of questions	INSTRUMENTS 4 interval scales	ANALYSIS Rank	Score
No.1. What is a Child's Concept of Positive Peace: Preference of Racial Diversities (PRD)	Set #1 2 Groups of Open-Ended Visual Questions	a. Very Developed b. Developed c. Less Developed d. Not Developed	9 Raw 6 " 3 " 0 "
No.2 & 3. What is a Child's Concept of Nonviolent-Conflict-Resolution (NCR) ? (Subjectively & Objectively)	Sets #2 & #3 2 Groups of Open-Ended Visual Questions	a. Very Developed b. Developed c. Less Developed d. Not Developed	9 Mean 6 " 3 " 0 "
No.4. What is a Child's Concept of Negative Peace (NP) Peace in contrast to War?	Set #4 2 Open-Ended Questions *	a. Very Developed b. Developed c. Lees Developed d. Not Developed	9 Raw 6 " 3 " 0 "
No. 5. What is a Child's Degree of Mental Development? 0 = 0	Concept Assessment Kit Conservation (Goldschmid & Bentler, 1968) "	a. Very Developed b.Developed c. Less Developed	6&5 = 9 Raw 4&3 = 6 " 2&1 = 3 " d. Not Developed

* Question No. 2 is not counted in data analysis

In part 2, several ANOVAs, F-Tests, and Linear Regression were conducted to investigate the possible correlation between data collected in part 1. Also, a series of Chi-Squares were conducted to normalize the distribution of NCR data.

Findings

Findings included two parts of descriptive and correlational.

Descriptive Part

The descriptive part consists of data concerning subjects' mental development and three aspects of peace concepts: PRD, NCR, and NP. Table 2 shows the frequency of raw scores and percentages of each variable

Table 2

Frequency of Raw Scores and Percentage of Subjects' Mental Development and Understanding of Three Aspects of Peace Concepts

Developmental Degrees	A < & = 9 Very Developed		B < & = 6 Developed		C < & = 3 Less Developed		D < & = 0 Not Developed		Mean	SD
Variables / / Frequencies	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	--	--
1.Positive Peace (PRD)	8	19 %	9	21 %	25	60 %	0	0 %	4.79	2.39
2. Nonviolence (NCR)	20	48 %	22	52 %	0	0 %	0	0 %	7.43	1.52
Average of S&O-NCR										
a. Subjective-NCR	22	52 %	18	43 %	2	5 %	0	0 %	7.43	1.78
b. Objective-NCR	15	36%	27	64 %	0	0 %	0	0 %	7.07	1.45
3.Negative Peace (NP)										
a.War Concept	18	42%	20	47%	3	7%	1	2%	6.71	2.18
b.Peace Concept	0	5 %	8	19 %	30	71 %	2	5%	3.71	1.85
4.Peace GPA	0	0 %	30	71 %	12	29 %	0	0 %	5.14	1.37
5.Mental Development	26	62%	16	38%	0	0%	0	0%	7.86	1.47
(MD)(Piagetian Test)	(6 & 5)		(4 & 3)							

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Mental Development

The result of the Piagetian test "Conservation Concept Assessment Kit" revealed that the majority of subjects had reached the concrete operational stage of Piagetian cognitive development, and the remaining subjects were in the entry level of this stage.

Children's Understanding of Peace Concepts

Comparison of subjects' means of peace concepts revealed that they obtained the highest mean of 7.43 in NCR. Subjects' mean for positive peace was 4.79 and for negative peace was 3.71. Subjects' mean for war concepts was 6.71. This revealed that subjects demonstrated a higher understanding of war than of negative peace concepts, but a higher understanding in NCR and PRD than NP. Figure 1 compares three aspects of peace concepts.

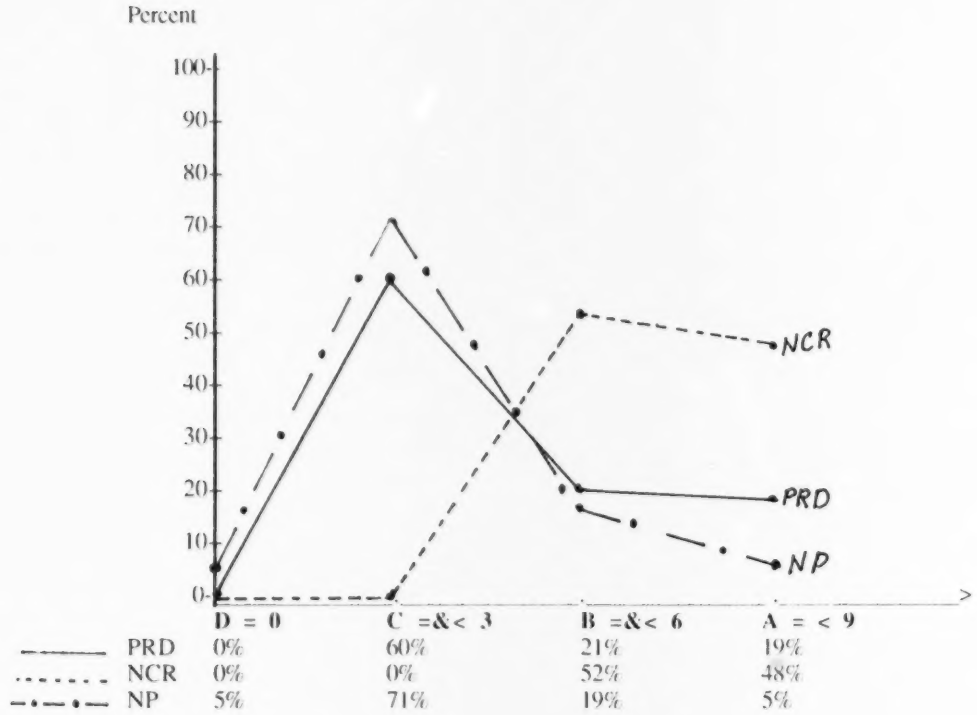

Figure 1

Comparison of Three Aspects of Peace Concepts

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Preference of Racial Diversities (PRD)

Only 19% of subjects selected the Target Picture as their first choice, and 21% as their second and third choice. This indicated that almost 40% of the subjects demonstrated a "very developed", "developed", and "less developed" concept in PRD. The remaining 60% of the subjects' preferences were not focused on a particular racial factor. This indicates that majority of subjects did not demonstrate any particular racial attitudes or preferences, such as pro-white or own-racial-preference, over PRD. However, the comparison of subjects' preferences of racial issues revealed that PRD was still highest among other racial preferences or attitudes.

Subjects' Concepts of Preference of Racial Diversities Versus Similarities

Order of Choice	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Frequency Percentage	**19 %**	7 %	14 %	17 %	43%
Racial Diversities	**Higher 40%**			**Lower 60%**	
Racial Similarities	**81 %**				

Nonviolent-Conflict-Resolution (NCR)

Data indicated that the means of subjective-nonviolent-conflict-resolution (S-NCR) and objective-nonviolent-conflict-resolution (O-NCR) were both close and that there was no considerable difference between them. Therefore, the mean of S-NCR and O-NCR raw scores were calculated for individuals and were used as NCR in the entire process of data analysis.

Data also revealed that subjects earned high scores of "A" and "B" in NCR. However, this result was in contrast with first, the nature of child being egocentric and second the nature of conflicts which normally occur in a typical pre-school setting. To investigate this contrast, the researcher developed further analysis in NCR from five different perspectives considering "taking" and "giving" in sharing (Table 3) . Table 4 revalues the relevant data concerning the subjects' five different perspectives in sharing.

Table 3
Subjects' Concepts of Five Perspectives in Nonviolent-Conflict-Resolution

Perspectives	Situations
1. Taking-in-sharing **(TS)**	When subject wants to play with the tricycle used by the playmate
2. Giving-in-sharing **(GS)**	When the playmate wants to play with the tricycle used by the subject
3. Rejected in Taking-in-sharing **(R-TS)**	When playmate rejects sharing the tricycle with the subject
4. Forced in giving-in-sharing **(F-GS)**	When playmate forces subject to give up the tricycle
5. Taking-and-Giving-in-sharing **(TG-S)**	When subject and other playmates all want to play with the same tricycle

Table 4

Raw and Percentage Frequency, Mean, and SD of Subject's Answers to Five Perspectives of Sharing in Nonviolent Conflict Resolution

Five Perspective / Category	A = < 9 Very Developed		B =< 6 Developed		C =< 3 Less Developed		D =< 0 Not Developed		Mean - - -	S D - - -
Situations / Score	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	Raw
1. TS	41	98%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	8.71	.89
2. GS	15	36%	19	45%	8	19%	0	0%	6.50	2.56
3. R-TS	7	17%	29	69%	5	12%	1	2%	5.85	1.93
4. F-GS	0	0%	39	97%	3	7%	0	0%	5.5	1.68
5. TG-S	39	93%	2	5%	1	2%	0	0%	8.75	1.11

TS= Taking-in-sharing
GS= Giving-in-sharing
RTS= Rejected in Taking-in-sharing
F-GS= Forced in giving-in-sharing
TG-S= Taking-and-Giving-in-sharing

Table 3 and 4 revealed subjects' three different characteristics and capabilities in sharing.

Comparison of Taking-in-sharing (TS) With Giving-in-sharing (GS)

In a (TS) situation, 98% of the subject obtained "A = a very developed" concept in NCR. In a (GS) situation, 81% of the subjects obtained "B = a developed" concept, and 19% obtained "C = a less developed" concept in NCR.

Figure 2 compares the frequency of subjects' scores for TS and GS.

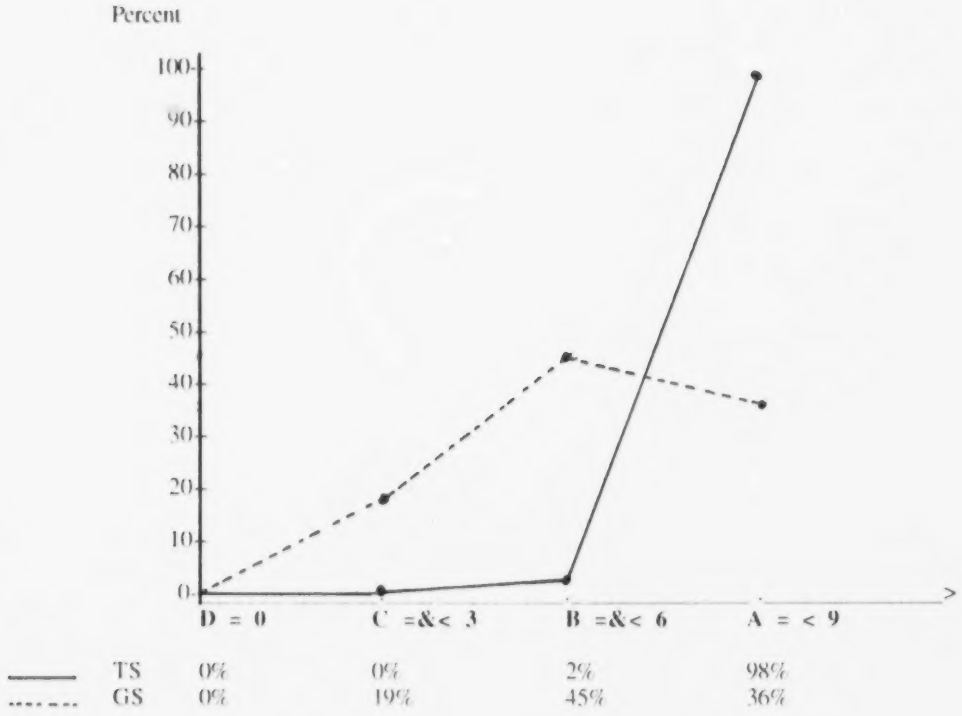

Figure 2
Frequency of Subjects' Scores in Concepts of Taking-in-Sharing (TS) and Giving-in-Sharing (GS)

Comparison of Taking-in-sharing (TS) With Taking and Giving-in-sharing (TG-S)

In an TG-S situation, 93% of the subjects obtained "A = a very developed" concept in NCR. This score is similar to results of the (TS) situation in which 98% of the subjects obtained "A = a very developed" concept in NCR.

Figure 3 shows the frequency of subjects' scores in TS and TG-S.

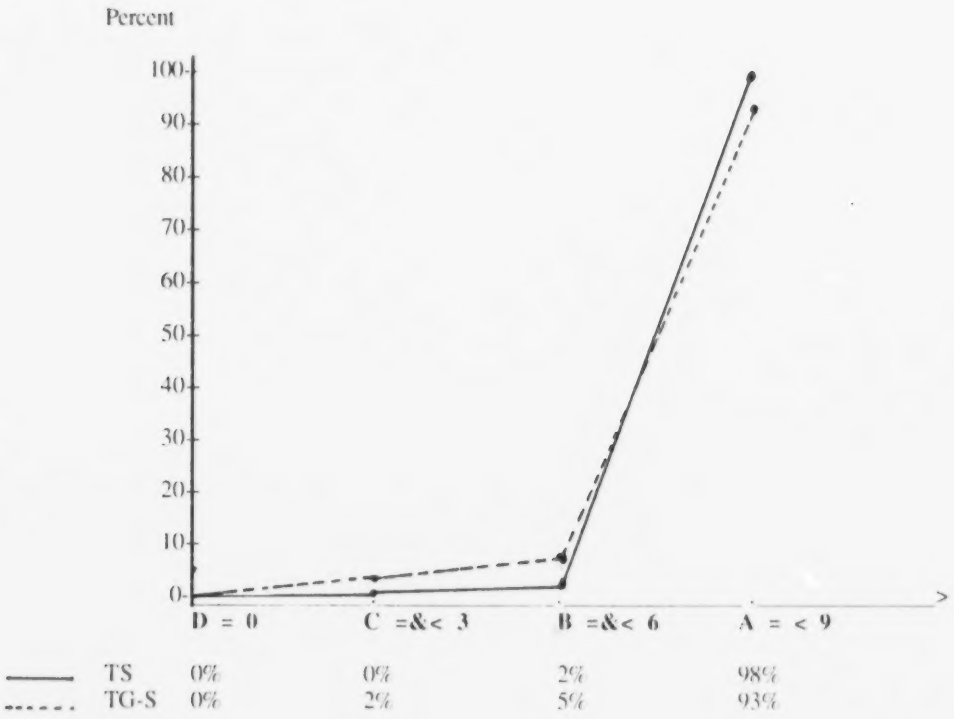

Figure 3
Frequency of Subjects' Scores in Concepts of
Taking-in-Sharing (TS) and
Taking-and-Giving-in-Sharing (TGS)

Comparison of Rejected in Taking-in-Sharing (R-TS) With Forced in Giving-in-Sharing (F-GS)

In an R-TS situations, 86% of the subjects obtained "A & B " demonstrating a "very developed" and "developed" concept in NCR. In a F-GS situation, 97% of the subjects obtained "B" demonstrating a "developed" subject in NCR. The results indicated that the majority of subjects obtained a developed concept in R-ST and F-GS in NCR.

Figure 4 shows the frequency of subjects' scores in both R-TS and F-GS situations.

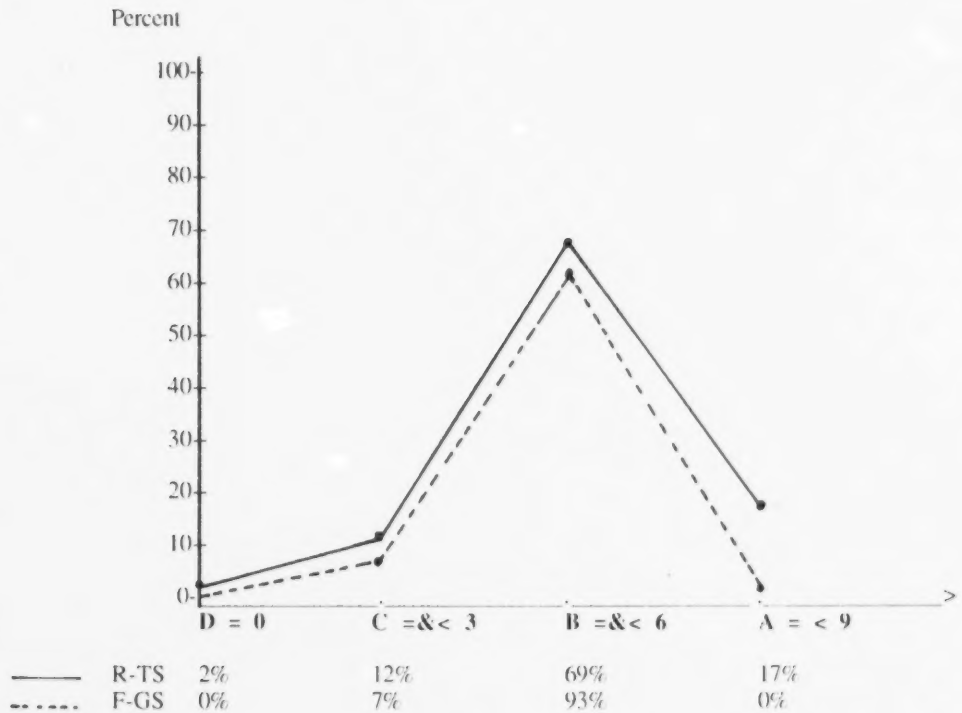

Figure 4
Frequency of Subjects' Scores in Concepts of Rejected in Taking-in-Sharing (R-TS) and Forced in Giving-in-Sharing (F-GS)

Negative Peace (NP)

Results indicated that, while the majority of subjects demonstrated a "very developed" concept of war, they had a "less developed" concept in NP. Interpretation of subjects explanations revealed that subjects obtained their concepts of war through direct and indirect involvement in a conflict. Types of conflicts were conflicts between children, conflicts between adults, and the war games. The concept of war emerged from indirect experienced through media and history lessons.

Correlational Part

In this part, the researcher investigated the existence of two series of correlations between: 1) three aspects of peace concepts (PRD,NCR,NP) and subjects, a) mental development, b) gender difference, c) background in peace education; 2) negative peace with other aspects of peace concepts as PRD and NCR.

Although several ANOVAs F-Tests, Linear Regressions, and Chi-Square tests were conducted to investigate possible correlations between variables, no significant results were obtained. A method of continuous scoring was also utilized to obtain more subtle data from a second series of ANOVAs, and F-Tests, but P did not become significant for any of these correlations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Mental Development

Subjects being in the concrete operational level of Piagetian cognitive development became eligible for categories of early stages of Kohlberg's moral development (Peconventional) and Selman's social role-taking theories (3 to 6 years old) . This indicated that subjects could be capable of understanding PRD and NCR, which are partly involved in the development of moral and social role-taking.

Preference for Racial Diversities (PRD)

It could be concluded that the core of PRD is considering others' viewpoints in a respectful and appreciative manner. At a higher level, this consideration required some degree of development in moral and social role-taking. According to Kohlberg and Selmen, some degree of cognitive development is perquisite for development of moral and social role-taking. Therefore the resulting low percentage of 40% of the subjects who demonstrated different levels of understanding in PRD could be related to subjects' immature cognitive development as well as limited information about and social interaction with other racial groups.

In general, the result of PRD indicated that there is the possibility of modifying this sense for establishment of one of the principle of world peace concept from early childhood.

This study recommends that the development of PRD could be possible through cognitive development and social learning. Both of these aspects could be

best developed through interaction and direct experience of the individual with different racial and cultural groups.

Although the media is not the best avenue through which to establish racial and cultural awareness, if cultural information could be received in the form of concept learning, it could be effective in preparing children for this important and necessary movement toward positive peace.

Nonviolent-Conflict-Resolution (NCR)

Findings revealed that subjects showed higher developed concepts in NCR than in PRD or NP. However, further investigation about subjects' five perspectives in sharing revealed that 5 and 6 year olds demonstrated three different capabilities in NCR. First, in both (TS) and (GS) situations, the subject's mind was guided and governed by egocentrism. Second, similarity and closeness of results in TS and TG-S situations indicated that subjects were capable of contorting the power of the egocentric mind to accept reciprocity in a TG-S situation. Third, further analysis of subjects' questions about R-TS and F-GS revealed that subjects' developed concepts in R-TS and F-GS could be interpreted as "passive and negative" concepts in nonviolence rather than positive and creative capabilities in NCR.

It could be concluded that egocentrism is a human characteristic that could be modified for a child or adult to seek a nonviolent resolution. However, the ability to modify the egocentric mind could be more developed in the democratic environment of a pre-school system that values and practices justice in sharing situations.

It could be recommended that by eliminating the fear of provocation through practicing justice in children's environments, the child's creative thinking and use of NCR skills could be encouraged.

Reward and Punishment

Justice forms the basis for peace in any social environment, and to settle conflicts, justice should be practiced. The basic elements in the practice of justice are reward and punishment. The ultimate goal of social punishment is to remove threat from the social environment in order to provide peace for other members of society rather than to modify undesirable behaviors of the aggressive individuals. However, to practice justice in a pre-school, one should start with rewards and positive

reinforcement to motivate the occurrence of desirable social behaviors (Skinner, 1985).

Negative Peace

Since subjects' information about war was mainly from indirect experience, by providing the same experience in peace making their concept of negative peace could be expanded. However, if subjects' peace concepts were to be enhanced through development of their NCR skills and PRD concepts, mere information about negative peace might as well be achieved.

Correlations

Insignificant results from the correlational part of the study could be interpreted due to subjects being in a stage of inadequate cognitive development. According to Kohlberg's and Selman's theories, cognitive development is a prerequisite for achievement of some degree of moral and social role-taking.

On the other hand, understanding of both PRD and NCR concepts is related to some degree of development of moral and social role-taking. However, since the majority of subjects were in early or beginning stages of concrete operational development, they could not reveal highly developed in PRD and NCR concepts.

Also, this lack of achievement caused a bias of concentrated scores in certain stages of developmental growth. This concentration was in contrast to the nature of correlational studies which required normality and variance of distribution of scores.

However, newly designed instrument used in this study to investigate different aspects of peace concepts, and the limited number of Montessori schools in Austin, Texas could be considered among the biases for obtaining the insignificant results.

Recommendations for further studies

There are indications that make this study as the start of a growing process in peace research in early childhood:

1. The considerable work of review of literature that clarified and classified the peace concept, and provided a logical pattern for variables and measurements of this study.
2. Classification of peace concept and the newly designed measurement in this study, should encourage conducting replication studies to validate finding of this study.
3. Conducting further studies could be encouraged to improve the reliability of the instruments used in this study

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